



Fit Business Tips of the Month

OCTOBER

October is a great time to enjoy the outdoors and all of the fruits and vegetables that come into their peak with the changing season. This month's fruit and vegetable of the month – persimmons and pumpkins – are tasty choices to include in your diet.

QUICK AND SIMPLE TIPS

Enjoy the Fall Colors: As the temperature cools and the days become shorter, tree leaves turn to vibrant shades of red, orange and yellow. Treat yourself by taking a walk through your neighborhood or city park. Or, encourage outdoor walking meetings during work so that you and your co-workers can be reenergized by the change of the fall colors.

Pick your Produce: Corn mazes, apple orchards and pumpkin patches are great places to enjoy fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables, as well as enjoy a little physical activity when picking your own produce! You can find a farm near you by visiting <http://calagtour.org/AgTour.asp>. Your whole family will enjoy picking seasonal fruits and vegetables on the weekend, and then bring in a selection of your harvest to enjoy during the work day or to share with colleagues.





October's Fruit of the Month

PERSIMMONS

Health Benefits

Persimmons are originally from ancient China, but today, hundreds of varieties are grown in California. Fuyu's and Hachiya's are the two varieties of persimmons most often found in supermarkets. This brightly colored fruit is an excellent source of vitamin A, a good source of vitamin C, and rich in fiber. Including persimmons in your low-fat diet along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables will help you maintain good vision, strengthen your immune system and help to lower your risk of heart disease and some cancers.

Selection

Choose persimmons that are round, plump and have a glossy, deep orange-red colored skin. Avoid fruits with blemishes, bruises, cracked skin or those missing the green leaves on top. Select ripe persimmons only if you plan to eat them immediately otherwise, buy firmer fruits and allow them to ripen. Fuyu persimmons will still be pretty firm when ripe and can be enjoyed sliced like an apple. The Hachiya variety, however, must be very soft to enjoy its sweet flavor.

Storage

Avoid eating underripe Hachiya persimmons as they have a very bitter taste and will suck all of the moisture from your mouth. This tartness, however, will go away as the fruit ripens. Ripen persimmons in a paper bag at room temperature, but be sure to eat them as soon as possible when ripe because overripe persimmons quickly turn mushy. Once ripe, store persimmons in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Preparation Ideas

Fresh persimmon slices make a delicious snack and a great addition to salads. Try mixing cubed persimmon with grapes, cubed apple and sliced kiwifruit for a colorful fall salad. Or make salsa with a twist – add chopped persimmon, onion, tomatillo, cilantro, and Serrano chili and mix together. Persimmons are a very versatile fruit, so don't be afraid to get creative!

FEATURED PERSIMMON RECIPE: PERSIMMON-RASPBERRY YOGURT PARFAIT

Ingredients

- 2 ripe persimmons
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup fresh or frozen raspberries, thawed
- 1 cup low-fat granola without raisins

Preparation

1. Cut each persimmon into 4 wedges; peel wedges, using fingers or small paring knife. Cut each wedge into 4 additional wedges; set aside.
2. Combine brown sugar and yogurt in a small bowl; stir until well blended.
3. Spoon $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the yogurt mixture into each of 4 dessert glasses.
4. Top with 4 persimmon wedges, 2 tablespoons raspberries, and 2 tablespoons granola.
5. Repeat the layers, ending with granola. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings. $\frac{1}{4}$ recipe per serving

Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 242, Carbohydrate 49g, Protein 8g, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 6mg, Sodium 103mg, Dietary Fiber 5g

Recipe courtesy of *Cooking Light*.





October's Vegetable of the Month

PUMPKIN

Health Benefits

Americans are most familiar with orange pumpkins, but did you know that pumpkins also come in colors ranging from white and peach to green and blue? Fresh pumpkins usually begin to show up in grocery stores and farmers' markets in October and are available through the fall and winter. However, canned, pureed pumpkin is available in most supermarkets year round. Including pumpkin in your low-fat diet along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables will help you maintain good vision, strengthen your immune system and help to lower your risk of heart disease and some cancers.

Selection

Pumpkins range in size from less than a pound to more than 100 pounds. Large pumpkins are decorative and fun to carve, but the smaller sizes are more tender and juicy. Choose pumpkins that are firm, blemish-free, and heavy for their size.

Storage

Whole pumpkins can be stored at room temperature for up to a month or in the refrigerator for up to three months.

Preparation Ideas

Pumpkins usually bring to mind jack-o-lanterns and holiday pies, but this fall staple is also great in soups, breads, and many other dishes. To cook fresh pumpkin, cut the pumpkin in half and scrape out the seeds (set aside if you plan to roast them later). Continue to cut the pumpkin into smaller pieces, remove the hard outer peel with a vegetable peeler or sharp knife, and boil the pieces for 15 to 20 minutes in lightly salted water. The pieces can then be drained and mashed, or run through a blender to make pumpkin puree. Season the puree with salt, pepper and, if you'd like, a little bit of butter. Serve the seasoned puree as a vegetable side dish, or use as the basis for soups or other side dishes.

FEATURED PUMPKIN RECIPE: PUMPKIN OATMEAL

Ingredients

- ½ cup old fashioned oats
- 1 cup water
- ⅛ cup pumpkin puree (canned or fresh)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon or nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar

Makes 1 serving.

Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 220, Carbohydrate 44g, Protein 7g, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 1g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 12mg, Dietary Fiber 4g

Recipe courtesy of *Recipe Zaar*.

Preparation

1. Combine all ingredients in a microwave safe bowl.
2. Microwave oatmeal for 2-3 minutes, depending on your microwave.
3. Remove from microwave and stir well.

